

Remarks

In the final Office Action of May 8, 2006, the Examiner allowed claims 1-21, 28, and 29.

Additionally, the Examiner rejected claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 and rejected claims 22-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on various combinations of U.S. Patent No. 6,349,296 to Broder et al.; U.S. Patent No. 5,469,354 to Hatakeyama et al.; U.S. Patent No. 5,794,178 to Caid et al.; and U.S. Patent No. 5,067,152 to Kisor et al..

Initially, in accordance with Applicant's duty to provide information regarding the substance of an interview, a telephonic interview was held on June 21, 2006, between Applicant's representative and Examiner Dodds. In the interview, the rejection of claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 was discussed. The Examiner explained that his position is that claim 27 does not produce a tangible result and therefore defines non-statutory subject matter. Without necessarily agreeing with the Examiner's position, Applicant proposes amending claim 27 to recite generation of a compact representation using language similar to that recited in allowed claim 28.

In the interview, the Examiner agreed that such an amendment would overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 101 and that such an amendment would be considered if proposed in an After Final Amendment.

By this Amendment, Applicant proposes amending claim 27 as discussed in the interview with the Examiner. Applicant submits that the rejection of claim 27 is therefore obviated. Further, Applicant proposes canceling claims 22-26

without prejudice or disclaimer and adding new claims 30-33. New claims 30-33 depend from allowed claims 1, 14, 27, and 29, respectively.

In view of the cancellation of claims 22-26, Applicant submits that the rejection of these claims is obviated.

New claims 30-33 each include features relating to, for example, obtaining a value defining similarity between objects. At least by virtue of the dependency of these claims from allowed claims 1, Applicant submits that these claims are not disclosed or suggested by the prior art of record.

Applicant respectfully requests that this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 1-21 and 27-33 in condition for allowance. Applicant submits that the proposed amendment of claim 27 does not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since, as Applicant discussed with the Examiner, this amendment clearly overcomes the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Further, new claims 30-33 do not require any additional search or consideration of the prior art by the Examiner, since each of these claims depends from an allowed claim. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant submits that the claimed invention, as amended, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against this application. Applicant therefore requests the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration and reexamination of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 26, 2006

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